



February 2010

# Inside College Station

From the City of College Station, Home of Texas A&M University • College Station, Texas



## 2010 Census: 10 Questions in 10 Minutes

The 2010 Census will be arriving at each household in America in March, and the City of College Station wants to remind residents of the importance of getting counted.

Since George Washington and the founding fathers, the U.S. Census has been an important part of our nation's history. Every 10 years, census data reflect a new portrait of America. The data provide unique insight into the diverse and ever-changing population of the United States, and directly affect how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to state, local and tribal governments.

As the nation prepares for the 2010 Census, the following are answers to some commonly asked questions about the census and its importance.

### WHAT IS THE CENSUS?

The census was established in 1790 and is required by the U.S. Constitution once every 10 years. It was created to count everyone living in the United States,

regardless of immigration status.

### HOW ARE CENSUS DATA USED?

Census data affect everyone in the nation. Census data guide local decision-makers on where to build new roads, hospitals, child-care and senior centers, schools and more—even where to locate supermarkets, new housing, businesses and other facilities. Additionally, census data determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. A complete and accurate count is essential to ensure a better quality of life for everyone.

### WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

By law, every household in the United States must participate in the 2010 Census. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010. Households should complete and mail back their forms upon receipt. Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take a count in person.

### WHAT IF I'M A COLLEGE STUDENT?

College students are counted in the household they are residing in on April 1, 2010. Students who are living in university campus housing will be counted by the Census beginning in April. Students renting or owning homes in College Station should fill out one Census survey per house, with all residents listed on the form. You should not be counted at your parents' house unless you commute from your parents' home and actively live there.

### ARE MY RESPONSES CONFIDENTIAL?

Your responses are safe and confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both.

Participation in the Census is easy, important and safe, and your participation is vital.

The City of College Station will provide a number of updates and reminders between now and Census Day (April 1) via its Web site, Channel 19, Facebook and Twitter.



IT'S IN OUR HANDS

For more information, go to:  
[cstx.gov/2010census](http://cstx.gov/2010census)



## Exploring History Lunch Lecture

The Exploring History Lunch Lecture series continues its 2010 season with Becky Nugent, former City of College Station Public Communications Director. Becky recently published her first book, *If the Devil Had a Wife*, a true Texas tale of Becky's family, the Lutchers Starks, of Orange, Texas.

Join us on Wednesday, March 17 at 11:30 a.m. at the College Station Conference Center, Room 127 (1300 George Bush Drive). Please RSVP to Anne Boykin by Monday, March 15, [aboykin@cstx.gov](mailto:aboykin@cstx.gov) or 979.764.3491. The cost is \$5 per person. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

For more information, visit: [ifthedevilhadawife.com](http://ifthedevilhadawife.com)

## Healthy Household Habits –

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns and sidewalks, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing and for providing drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

Before beginning an outdoor project, there are several tips to keep in mind.

- Locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other materials.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of debris.
- Use hazardous substances like paints, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible, and follow the directions on the label.
- Clean up spills immediately, and dispose of the waste safely.
- Purchase and use non-toxic, biodegradable, recycled and recyclable products whenever possible.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors.
- Filter and reuse paint thinner when using oil-based paints.

By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings and automotive fluids off the ground and out of stormwater.

## Learn to Compost in Your Own Backyard -----

The Master Composting Training Program is designed to train committed individuals who want to gain composting expertise and assist in educating their community in the area of backyard composting. The program provides an opportunity for hands-on experience, lectures by guest speakers, instructional books and videos and an overview of the latest composting tools and techniques.

After completing the four day training course the Master Composters then volunteer 20 hours teaching friends and neighbors in the community. Completion of the class and volunteer hours leads to certification as an official Master Composter.

The next class begins March 2. There is a \$15 fee per person for the class. To register contact Shelia McQueen, Program Coordinator, at 979.764.3806 or [smcqueen@cstx.gov](mailto:smcqueen@cstx.gov). You can also download the registration form at [cstx.gov/bvswma](http://cstx.gov/bvswma).

## Decrease Energy Costs ---

In the cooler months, many homeowners will consider adding additional insulation to their homes for increased comfort and decreased energy costs. Before additional insulation is considered, it is most important to weatherize by sealing off air leaks. The unnecessary loss of heated and cooled air through an exchange with outside or attic air is more costly than any benefit derived from increased insulation levels, so it makes sense that air leakage should be addressed first.

Next, check all exterior doors to ensure they are properly weather stripped. All windows should be caulked and all penetrations into the attic space should be sealed. Remove grilles on duct outlets and bath fans where the connecting duct or fan housing meets the sheetrock and caulk. Wall outlets and switch plates should also be caulked and sealed around the outlet boxes and at the wiring entries from the attic. Inexpensive foam gaskets are available which can be installed behind the switch and socket plates that will help deter air infiltration as well. All plumbing entries from the attic and under sinks and toilets also should be caulked and sealed.

College Station Utilities recommends minimum R-values of R-30 in ceilings, R-13 in walls and R-19 in subfloors.

For more information on weatherization or insulation, contact CSU Energy Auditor Brian Henry at 979.764.6274.

## Do You Have Water Sense?

Is home remodeling on your list of New Year's resolutions? One of the best home improvements you can make to save water is replacing your old water-guzzling toilet with a Water-Sense High-Efficiency toilet. You could save up to 4,000 gallons per year!

Water Sense is a program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that makes it easy to select water-efficient products with a label backed by independent testing and certification. In 2008, consumers who installed Water-Sense labeled toilets and faucets saved more than 9.3 billion gallons of water and \$55 billion on water and sewer utility bills. Water Sense products are available locally in College Station.

Be sure to stop by the College Station Utilities booth at the Bryan-College Station Home Builders Association Home Products & Garden Show, February 27 and 28, to learn all the many ways you can easily save water, energy and money in your home.

Show hours are 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturday, and 12 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, at the Brazos County Expo Complex.